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Message from the President

This Economic Recovery Package Addresses Women's Needs

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, signed into law February 17, provides substantial economic help for women and families. With 20,000 jobs being lost each day nationally, double-digit unemployment among women who head families, and state and local governments considering cuts to health care, education, assistance for the elderly, and other vital services, the Act strengthens the safety net for those in need.

Funding to rebuild infrastructure and develop clean energy will create many jobs and provide lasting benefits, but most of those jobs are in fields where women are still severely underrepresented. To help ensure that these opportunities are available to all, the Act provides \$80 million for enforcement of worker protection laws and regulations. In addition, the increased funding the Act provides for health care, education, child care, and other social services will preserve and create jobs in fields currently dominated by women. With women's unemployment rate rising quickly, the Act will encourage states to expand unemployment insurance coverage for jobless workers, especially women, as well as extend and increase benefits.

The Act will help low-income parents obtain the child care they need to find and keep jobs and help children get the early learning they need to succeed, including \$2 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant and \$2.1 billion for Head Start and Early Head Start. Funding for Pell grants is increased, and the tax credit for secondary education expenses is expanded.

The Act will help protect child support enforcement services for over 17 million children and their single parents, mostly mothers, by restoring federal funds cut from the child support enforcement program in 2005.

With states facing both increased demand for services and declining revenues, the Act provides \$87 billion in increased federal support for Medicaid. The Act also provides a 65 percent federal subsidy for nine months for those who obtain health insurance from a previous employer through COBRA coverage.

The Act increases food stamp benefits, and provides \$500 million for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), \$100 million for senior meals, and \$150 million for food banks.

In addition to direct spending, the Act provides billions of dollars in tax benefits for low- and moderate-income families. The expansion of the Child Tax Credit alone will help 13 million children in low-income families.

Helping those who are struggling to meet immediate needs not only alleviates hardship, it's one of the most effective ways to boost the economy because low-income people are more likely to quickly spend additional income to purchase goods and services in their communities. It's too bad that some important Medicaid and family planning provisions did not make it into the final bill, but we look forward to action on these and other important issues in the months ahead.

Best regards,

Regina L. Oldak

March is Women's History Month

The Commission for Women joins with other women's groups, including the National Women's History Project, to honor women's contributions to the social, economic, political, and cultural fabric of society. Visit the Commission's website (www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw) which features 30 women of historical significance to Montgomery County in the Commission's Women's History Archives. Their stories help us all to appreciate the hard won gains for which many have sacrificed to improve our own lives and the lives of our daughters. A special article on page 3 lists significant legislative and judicial gains for women's rights. Happy Women's History month to all.

Starting a Business?

Source: Jane Hobdy, Commissioner Montgomery County Commission for Women

Montgomery County has a plethora of resources for small and minority business owners. The county's Department of Economic Development (DED) provides small businesses access to resources and information designed to assist owners in developing viable and successful businesses in the county. Within the department is the Division of Business Empowerment, created to provide business development services to small and minority-owned businesses based in the county.

On October 15, DED hosted a small business resource meeting, bringing together representatives from several organizations aimed at supporting small, women, and/or minority-owned businesses to discuss their missions and available resources to Montgomery County business owners. The services offered range from business loans to marketing, and a variety of training, workshops, and seminars primarily focused on successful business development.

Resource	Organization	Web Site	Phone
Montgomery County Small Business Services	Montgomery County Department of Economic Development	www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ded	(240) 777-2000
Business Workshops	Montgomery County Commission for Women	www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw	(240) 777-8300
Small Business Loans	Maryland Small Business Development Center Network (assistance with loan packages)	www.mdsbdc.umd.edu	(301) 403-0501
Women Business Owners Network	Women's Business Owners of Montgomery County	www.wbo-mc.com	(301) 365-1755
Government Contracting and Small Business Certification Workshops	SCORE (Senior Corps of Retired Executives)	www.score.org/index.html	(202) 272-0390
Business Management Workshops and Program	Montgomery Works	www.montgomeryworks.com	(301) 946-1806
Networking, Local Business Support & Advocacy	Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce	www.montgomerycountychamber.com	(301) 738-0015

For more information on small business loans and services available to Montgomery County contact the Montgomery County Department of Economic Development. 240-777-2000 or email: ded.info@montgomerycountymd.gov.

New Microenterprise Loan Program

The Montgomery County Department of Economic Development has a New Microenterprise Loan Program, a financial and technical assistance program to assist existing microenterprises located throughout the county. The Microenterprise Loan Program works with entrepreneurs that traditional lending institutions consider too small or risky. The department expects the program to increase the number of persons able to start and maintain businesses in the county.

Eligibility for Microenterprise Loan Program:

- Available only to companies located in Montgomery County
- For small businesses with annual revenues of \$250,000 or less and five or fewer employees
- Business principals must be at least 18-years-old and reside within Montgomery County
- Maximum amount of \$15,000 with terms of three years or less
- Loan must be used to start, expand or stabilize a business
- Special consideration given to women- and minority-owned businesses

DED will use its resources to develop the capacity of micro-enterprises to repay loans so they may then qualify for loans through traditional lending sources. Participants will work with various resource partners, including the Maryland Small Business Development Center Network, U.S. Small Business Administration

For more information or to request an application, call 240-777-2035 or email: ded.info@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Lilly Makes History

Legislative and Judicial Benchmarks for Women's Rights

On January 6, 2009 Capital Hill became a bustling locale once more with the new 111th Congress starting its session. The first piece of legislation signed by President Obama was the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. This act codifies in law what was a long standing judicial interpretation of civil rights law, that employees can file pay discrimination claims within 180 days of each discriminatory paycheck they receive.

Legislation and judicial decisions have long played a part in shaping the lives of many in the United States. The Commission

Date and Name of the Legislation/Executive Order/Court Case Followed by a brief description of its impact.

1920 19th Amendment Women's Suffrage Act: Gave women the right to vote.

1938 The Fair Labor Standards Act: Established minimum wage without regard to sex.

1963 The Equal Pay Act: Required equitable wages for the same work, regardless of the sex of the worker.

1964 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act: Prohibited all forms of employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex.

1967 Executive Order 11246: Federal agencies and contractors must take active measures to ensure that women as well as minorities enjoy the same educational and employment opportunities as white males.

1968 Fair Housing Act (Also known as the Civil Rights Act of 1968): Prohibits discrimination concerning the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin.

1969 *Bowe v. Colgate-Palmolive Company*: Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals rules that women meeting the physical requirements may work in many jobs that had been reserved for men only.

1970 *Schultz v. Wheaton Glass Company*: A U.S. Court of Appeals rules that jobs held by men and women need to be "substantially equal" but not "identical" to fall under the protection of the Equal Pay Act. (Even if the job title is different, if the jobs are essentially the same, they must be paid the same - e.g. an 'Executive Assistant' may not be paid more than a 'Secretary' if the duties are essential the same.)

1971 *Phillips v. Martin Marietta Corporation*: The U.S. Supreme Court outlaws the practice of private employers refusing to hire women with pre-school children.

1972 Title IX of the Education Amendments: Prohibits sex discrimination in all aspects of education programs receiving federal support.

1972 *Corning Glass Works v. Brennan*: The U.S. Supreme Court rules employers may not justify paying women lower wages because that is what they traditionally received under the "going market rate." A wage differential occurring "simply because men would not work at the low rates paid women" is unacceptable.

for Women, through its Policy and Legislation Committee (PAL) continues to work on the state and national level for legislative, judicial, and administrative policies which expand the equal rights and full participation of women in all segments of society.

As we enter Women's History Month, it is appropriate to remember major pieces of legislation and judicial decisions that have improved the lives of women in the U.S. and moved us closer to equality.

1973 *Roe V. Wade*: The U.S. Supreme Court rules that that the Constitution protects women's right to terminate an early pregnancy, thus making abortion legal in the U.S.

1974 *Fair Housing Act Amended*: Outlaws discrimination in housing and credit on the basis of sex.

1974 *Equal Credit Opportunity Act*: Requires that reports to credit bureaus must be made in the names of both husband and wife if both use an account or are responsible for repaying the debt.

1978 *The Pregnancy Discrimination Act*: Bans employment discrimination against pregnant women.

1986 *Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson*: The U.S. Supreme Court rules sexual harassment is a form of illegal job discrimination.

1988 *Fair Housing Act Amended*: Prohibits discrimination in housing on the bases of sex or having a family.

1993 *Family and Medical Leave Act*: Permits an employee to take unpaid leave of up to 12 weeks per year due to a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his job or to care for a sick family member or to care for a new child (including by birth, adoption or foster care).

1994 *The Violence Against Women Act*: Provides federal funds for services for victims of rape and domestic violence, allows women to seek civil rights remedies for gender-related crimes, provides training to increase police and court officials' sensitivity and a national 24-hour hotline for battered women.

1996 *Cohen V. Brown University*: A U.S. Court of Appeals upholds strong enforcement of Title IX's requirement that female students be given equal opportunities to participate in sports.

1998 *Gerbser v. Lago Vista School District and Davis V. Monroe County Board of Education*: U.S. Supreme Court holds that sexual harassment in schools violates Title IX, whether perpetrated by a teacher, staff member, or other student.

2009 *The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act*: States that the 180-day statute of limitations for pay discrimination resets with each new discriminatory paycheck.

Source: www.legacy98.org/timeline.html

2009 Women's Legislative Briefing

A high energy crowd of well over 700 women and men packed the rooms at the 29th annual Women's Legislative Briefing at its new location at the University of Maryland, Shady Grove Campus. Sponsored by the Montgomery County Commission for Women and more than 70 community and women's organizations, this year's event included greetings from Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett, Council President Philip Andrews, and the Prince George's County Executive's Chief of Staff Michael D. Herman.

Congresswoman Donna Edwards presented an inspiring keynote address that brought the crowd to its feet. Six workshops followed where guests learned more about legislation and the legislative process. The workshops included: Ensuring Women's Health, Securing Our Future, Working for Economic Equity, Negotiating the Legislative Process, Protecting Women and Families, and Achieving Elected and Appointed Office. Area legislators, advocates, lobbyists, as well as experts in these fields met in panels to discuss information on upcoming legislation at the county, state, and federal level.

The afternoon came to a close with a plenary session "Ending Poverty for Women and Children: A Call to Action." This panel included representatives from the Center for American Progress, the National Women's Law Center, and the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unwanted Pregnancy. Discussion focused on why women with families are over represented among the poor and proposed policy initiatives that can help these families avoid or work their way out of poverty. Poverty and strategies to meet the needs of women and their families is a top priority for the Montgomery County Commission for Women, which will be launching its Mothers and Poverty Action Agenda this spring 2009.

The Commission for Women thanks every one who worked so hard on this program –especially our 70 co-sponsoring organizations and friends, whose support makes this event possible –as well as the more than 700 women and men who came together to develop a stronger voice in the legislative process. Special thanks to all of our dedicated elected officials who took the time out of their busy schedules to share their expertise.



Are you experiencing stress in your life, family, relationships, or work?

Come to the Commission for Women's Counseling and Career Center

Affordable Counseling Services

Helping with Life and Work Transitions

Personal and Career Counseling for Individuals and Couples

We offer goal oriented counseling proved by highly trained professional staff to adults who are experiencing a wide variety of issues and concerns.

To schedule appointments, please call
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Monday, Thursday, Friday - 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Tuesday & Wednesday - 8:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

401 North Washington Street, Suite 100, Rockville, MD 20850
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw

A sliding scale discount may be available for Montgomery County residents.

Counseling and Career Center

Upcoming Workshops

How To Budget Your Money

Thursday, March 19, 2009 10:00 a.m. -noon
(1 session) FEE: \$20

Learn how to develop a smart and usable budget while coping with today's high costs. This workshop led by a banking professional, will give you tips and strategies to make money management easier and more effective for you.

Presented by Barbara Hillard, M & T Bank

Coping With Change And Transition

Thursday, March 19, 2009 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
(1 session) FEE: \$20

A best friend moves away, a new job requires relocating, a divorce occurs, a child goes away to school, a chronic illness is diagnosed.

All change, whether positive or negative, contains elements of loss. Finding balance between holding on and letting go is one of life's greatest challenges and one of its important rewards. In this workshop, you will have the opportunity to examine ways of acknowledging life's changes and transitions and moving through these difficult times to a place of renewal.

Presented by Eliane Herdani, M.S., LCPC.

You Can Do It! Confidence Buidling For Women

Friday, March 20, 2009 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
(1 session) FEE: \$40

What would you do today if you knew you could not fail?

Confidence is like a muscle. The more you exercise it, the stronger you get. What would you need to change to trust yourself, be more self-reliant, self-assured and bold? How would this confidence help you achieve your goals? This day-long workshop will introduce you to strategies for building self-assurance and taking powerful action.

Presented by Sharon Fountain, M.S.

Investing In Your Future: Building A Portfolio Of Career Assets

Tuesday, March 24, 2009 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
(1 session) FEE: \$20

- Have you ever thought of your career as a portfolio of investments of your time?
- Do you know what you would like to be doing five, ten, or even twenty or more years from now?
- Will your current career path take you there?

During this workshop, you will discover how to:

- define and fulfill your unique personal purpose
- diversify career risk by choosing the right mix of career assets that align with your personal purpose
- create new career and community opportunities throughout your lifetime

Presented by Elena Chiru, M.Ed.

Conflict Resolution For Couples

Tuesday, March 24, 2009 6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.
(1 session) FEE: \$20 per person (COUPLES ONLY)

Conflicts in relationships arise out of a lack of good communication skills. This course will provide basic tools for the successful resolution of conflict. It is designed to provide a framework couples can use to tackle a small conflict and reach a resolution through negotiation, using goodwill and building upon the communication tools learned in the "Let's Talk" workshops.

Led by Marian Horton, MSW, and Clyde Horton, Personal Coach, who are experienced couples' group facilitators. At the conclusion of this seminar, participants will be able to:

- state your point of view without blaming your partner
- "hear" your partner's point of view
- build goodwill in the relationship
- develop an appreciation for your partner's underlying concerns
- move towards creating a solution that works for both of you

PREREQUISITE: Attendance at Let's Talk workshop.

Registration is limited to 10 couples. Participants must be interviewed before registration. In order to register, please contact Louise Hanson at 240-777-8300.

Presented by Marian Horton, MSW, and Clyde Horton Personal Coach

The Importance Of Marketing Yourself

Wednesday, March 25, 2009 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
(1 session) FEE: \$20

In today's economy, you need to be your own marketing specialist.

In this workshop, we will discuss the following:

- the best ways to present yourself and your skills
- identify potential employers
- successfully network

Presented by Rachel L. Manchester, M.S.

Financial Planning For Retirement

Wednesday, March 31, 2009 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
(1 session) FEE: \$20

Are you concerned about your life after retirement? Do you ever ask yourself: "When can I afford to retire"? or "Should I move my employer plan to an IRA"?

Learn how to maximize your financial comfort in retirement. Some of the topics addressed will include:

- how to reallocate your investments before retirement
- safety nets to protect your nest egg
- health care options in retirement

Presented by Jamie S. Lapin, C.F.P.

ONLINE REGISTRATION & PAYMENT AVAILABLE FOR ALL WORKSHOPS!!

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www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw

Family Justice Center

Source: Montgomery County Public Information Office

Verizon Wireless Grant Will Enable Pioneering Use of Video Conference Communication Between Domestic Violence Victims and Courts

Domestic violence victims in Montgomery County will find it a little easier to get help from County agencies soon, according to Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett who recently announced an important advance for the Montgomery County Family Justice Center.

The Family Justice Center will place necessary services for victims in one location, reducing the number of places a victim has to go to receive services. Preventing domestic violence and providing accessible, effective assistance to victims of domestic violence is one of the County Executive's priorities, and the Family Justice Center will play an important role in maintaining an ongoing, coordinated effort within county government.

Family Justice Centers have been identified as a "best practice" in the field of domestic violence intervention and prevention services, resulting in reduced homicides; increased victim safety; increased autonomy and empowerment for victims; reduced fear and anxiety for victims and their children; and reduced recantation and minimization by victims when wrapped in services and support.

At a press conference on February 5th, the Verizon Wireless Hopeline Program presented a \$60,000 grant to build a teleconferencing network at the Montgomery County Family Justice Center, making Montgomery County among the first jurisdictions in the U.S. to provide video-conferencing between the courts and domestic violence victims.

As a result, victims will be able to receive protective orders from the safety, security and comfort of the Center. This innovative use of technology will allow the Montgomery County Family Justice Center (MCFJC) to fulfill its mission of providing primary services at one location for victims of domestic violence.

The MCFJC, modeled after the original Family Justice Center in San Diego, will bring together law enforcement, prosecutors, health and human services, and other community

partners under one roof to help domestic violence victims achieve safety, receive appropriate treatment, and to provide them with accurate and timely legal advice.

"Victims of domestic violence deserve a safe haven where they can receive the services and law enforcement help they need, and that is what the new Montgomery County Family Justice Center will do," Mr. Leggett said.

Verizon has been a longtime supporter of innovative programs designed to reduce domestic violence and assist domestic violence victims.

"In 2008 alone, the Verizon Wireless HopeLine program -- together with the Verizon Foundation -- donated more than \$380,000 to support domestic violence prevention programs in the state of Maryland," said Mike Maiorana, regional president, Verizon Wireless, Washington, Baltimore, Virginia. "We can't think of a better way to start the new year than by making a sizable contribution to support the innovative work planned by the newly founded Family Justice Center of Montgomery County."

Resa Levy, President of the Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation, sees the Verizon gift as the first step in what the

Foundation expects to be a surge of community support. "This project is an outstanding example of what the combined efforts of professionals working in Montgomery County, as well as corporations, foundations and individuals can accomplish when we all work together," said Levy. "Verizon's wonderful lead gift will strengthen the Center's programs and services, and help create broad and diverse community support for the Center."

In addition to Levy, the Family Justice Foundation Founding Board includes Susan Mize, Donna K. Rismiller, Dorothy Fait, Catherine Leggett, and Matt Felix.

"As a public health professional, I am guided by 'best

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According to the Surgeon General, domestic violence is the leading cause of injuries in women, ages 15-44.

In Montgomery County during 2007:

- *7 children were killed by a parent with a history of domestic violence;*
- *3 women were murdered by their intimate partners;*
- *There were over 8,000 911 family disturbance calls;*
- *More than 2,500 victims filed for protective orders against their intimate partners;*
- *More than 2,000 incidents of domestic violence were documented by police;*
- *170 families sought shelter from domestic violence;*
- *More than 1,500 victims sought services at the County's domestic violence program.*

Updated Violence in Relationships Brochure



"Every woman who was murdered in Montgomery County in 2006 was killed by someone she knew."

"In that same year, 79 percent of all reported rape victims were attacked by either an acquaintance or a relative."

These crime statistics are part of the newly released brochure "Let's Talk About Violence in Relationships" by the Montgomery County Commission for Women (CFW).

Available in six languages – English, Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Korean, and Chinese – the brochure contains information about relationship violence, notes for parents, sections on abusive relationships and acquaintance rape, and tips on how to reduce the risk of assault in social situations. It also contains a list of local resources and links to curriculums on dating violence.

"Violence against women remains an important and serious issue for both adolescents and adults," said CFW

President Regina L. Oldak. " 'Let's Talk About Violence in Relationships' aims to teach readers how to recognize the signs of and avoid abusive relationships and how to protect themselves from acquaintance rape. The commission hopes that this brochure will serve as a useful resource in the community."

Copies of the brochure have been sent to high schools and are available to the public in libraries, community centers, Health and Human Services offices, Regional Services Centers, from local domestic violence organizations and at other locations throughout the area. All six versions of the brochure may be downloaded from the CFW website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cfw.

For more information about the brochures or the issue of relationship violence, call the Montgomery County Commission for Women at 240-777-8300.

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practices' that have been proven by research, results and experience," said Councilmember Trachtenberg. "The Family Justice Center model places necessary services for victims of domestic violence in one location and reduces the number of places a victim has to go to receive services."

"Domestic violence cases are one of the largest areas of growth in the Sheriff's Office, and the Montgomery County Family Justice Center will assist us in meeting the challenge of domestic violence in our community and reducing the terrible toll it takes," said Montgomery County Sheriff Raymond Kight.

"Citizens—particularly those who are disadvantaged or victimized—expect their basic human rights of safety, protection and law enforcement to be safeguarded," said Council President Andrews. "The Family Justice Center will be a source of pride and proven accomplishment for Montgomery County."

"The Family Justice Center will play a key role in the arrest, prosecution, and long-term accountability of domestic violence offenders," said State's Attorney John J. McCarthy. "The 'one stop-shop' approach has been shown in other jurisdictions to increase prosecution of offenders as it enhances the effect of good collaboration between government and law enforcement agencies."

The Montgomery County Family Justice Center Foundation, a non-profit 501 (c) 3 corporation formed to support the activities of the Montgomery County Family Justice Center (MCFJC), can be contacted directly at mcfjcfoundation@yahoo.com for additional information about sponsorship opportunities.

The Family Justice Center is scheduled to open in April 2009 at 600 Jefferson Street in downtown Rockville.

For more information about the Family Justice Center please contact: Patrick Lacefield: 240-777-6507 or Hannah Sassoon: 240-777-7099.

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